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ABSTRACT

The Appalachian area of Mississippi is inhabited by a great number of adults who have never read a newspaper. Although numerous newspapers are printed within Appalachia, many adults cannot comprehend the local newspapers. The problems of non-communication, low educational level, and isolation of these people are concerns of the Itawamba Junior College (IJC) Adult Education Department, which received a grant from the Appalachian Adult Basic Education Demonstration Center to implement a low-reading-level newspaper to be distributed in the 20 counties of Mississippi Appalachia. Thus, the first edition of 500 copies was printed on February 16, 1970. In March, a training session was held to orient teachers to uses of this type of newspaper. The number of copies was then increased to 2000 so that each Adult Basic Education (ABE) student in Mississippi Appalachia could receive a newspaper to be used as supplemental reading material. In conclusion, the "Appalachia News" has been widely accepted. Numerous requests have been received for the paper from teachers and organizations located outside of Mississippi Appalachia, and 5500 copies of the paper are being mailed to adult educators and students in Mississippi Appalachia and in 34 states, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. (Author/AL)

ED050856

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THE APPALACHIA NEWS

FINAL REPORT

MISSISSIPPI STATE MODULE

Submitted to

Appalachian Adult Basic Education Demonstration Center
Morehead State University
Morehead, Kentucky

June 1970

RC005285

FINAL REPORT SERIES

Project No.: 9-3-S-2-017

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DEMONSTRATION, DEVELOPMENTAL AND RESEARCH PROJECT FOR PROGRAMS, MATERIALS, FACILITIES AND EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY FOR UNDEREDUCATED ADULTS

Subcontract No.: AABEDC No. 444

APPALACHIA NEWS

MISSISSIPPI STATE MODULE

Project Directors
Larry Otis
Wylie Wood

Date: September 30, 1970

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant with the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Education
BUREAU OF ADULT, VOCATIONAL, AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Funded under the authority of Public Law: 89-750, Title III Section 309 (b) Adult Basic Education "Special Projects" of THE ADULT EDUCATION ACT OF 1966, AS AMENDED.

APPALACHIAN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION CENTER "SPECIAL PROJECTS"

I. ABSTRACT:

The Appalachian area of Mississippi is inhabited by a great number of adults who have never read a newspaper. Although there are numerous newspapers printed within the Appalachian area, many adults have limited reading levels and cannot comprehend the local newspapers. This Appalachian adult, because of his inability to relate to news of local, area, state, and national interest, is eventually lost in his efforts to succeed in making a better life for himself and his family.

The problems of non-communication, low education level, and isolation of the Mississippi Appalachian people are a concern of the Itawamba Junior College (IJC) adult education department. The Itawamba Junior College Adult Education Department received a grant from the AABEDC, Morehead, Kentucky, to implement a low reading level newspaper to be distributed to the twenty (20) county Appalachian region of Mississippi. The first edition of 500 copies was printed on February 16, 1970. A training session to orient teachers to the uses of a low reading-level newspaper was held in Tupelo, Mississippi, March 28, 1970, with eighty-five (85) teachers and supervisors in attendance. A mailing list was established at this meeting and number of copies had to be increased to 2,000 so that each ABE student in the Mississippi Appalachian region could receive a newspaper.

Professor Gale Denly, Department of Journalism, University of Mississippi, aided in establishing initial reading levels and format and evaluated the Appalachia News after the eight and sixteenth editions.

The Appalachian News has been widely accepted by students and adults educators with numerous requests for the paper from teachers and organization located out of the Mississippi Appalachian region. As a result of this increased interest 5,500 copies of the Appalachia News are being mailed to adult educators and students in the Mississippi Appalachian region, thirty-four states, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

The primary objective of the Appalachia News is to provide supplemental reading material for adult basic education students. After instituting and supervising ABE classes of the IJC Vocational and Technical Education Center, we found that each teacher was using the Appalachia News as an integral part of their curriculum. The teachers reported that students looked forward to receiving each edition of the paper. It is believed that the Appalachia News has and will provide a news media that can be used in Mississippi Appalachia.

II. INTRODUCTION:

There exist in Appalachia a need for adult basic education materials which have a sufficiently low readability level and are relevant to the adult basic education student. Due to the lack of relevant low readability level, materials, the Appalachian adult is left without any form of published communication.

Statistics show that in 1966 approximately sixty percent of the population of Mississippi Appalachia lived in rural areas. According to surveys conducted during this period of time two large poverty groups were identified. The largest group consisted of old-age families. The

second largest group was made up of families with a large number of children.

Families in the old-age group have a very low annual income and almost no gainful employment. The reason for poverty in the second group was becuase of the high cost of supporting a large family.

It was established through statistics that the lack of education is a major factor in low annual income of those groups.

The Mississippi Adult Basic Education Department is offering to the Mississippi Appalachian poor a chance to upgrade their educational level through an adult basic education class administered on the local level. Through these adult education classes a curriculum is taught with the major aim of raising the functional educational level, thereby increasing opportunities for gainful employment.

The Appalachia News is an integral part of the curriculum used by the local ABE teacher.

III. Objectives:

1. To demonstrate that a low reading-level newspaper can be effective as educational device in ABE classes:

   A. Techniques used by teachers

      An in-service training session was held to orient the teachers of adult education with various ways that an adult oriented newspaper could be used.

      A teacher's guide was given to each teacher showing the different methods and techniques that could be

used in teaching of various articles in the newspaper. A teacher's guide is included with this report.

B. Utilization by students

Interviews were conducted with a random sample of ABE students. The results showed the majority of the students first liked the crossword puzzle and looked forward to each edition of the paper so that the challenge of a puzzle could be met. The interview showed the next most popular reading area was the articles concerning home and family life, such as the recipes, health information, personal grooming, etc. The local interest articles proved to be the first choice of reading for the particular area which the articles concerns. National and state news ranked as the least important news items.

2. To demonstrate that a low reading level newspaper can be used as a recruitment technique.

Records show that during the period of January 1, 1969 to June 30, 1969, 1084 students were enrolled in ABE classes in the four county Itawamba Junior College district. During the period of time in which the Appalachia News was published, January 1, 1970 - June 30, 1970, 1480 students enrolled in the same junior college district. There was an increase in enrollment of 396 students during the same period of time. The Appalachia News was responsible for a certain percentage of this increase because of the publicity received from

other sources concerning the Appalachia News and because of new enrollees reading the Appalachia News received by students presently enrolled. Comments from new enrollees indicate that they enrolled in adult basic education classes because of the presence of the Appalachia News in the classroom.

3. To demonstrate that an Adult Basic Education Newspaper can provide information on employment opportunities, public assistance agencies, and other educational opportunities to the rural ABE student.

Teachers were asked to survey their class and determine the amount of knowledge of employment opportunities, public assistance agencies, and other educational opportunities that their students ascertained. The survey showed that the student had little or no information on social security, food stamps, welfare programs, community action agencies, employment agencies, and further educational opportunities. With this data plans were made to include articles of this nature which would be relevant to the students educational benefit with the idea of increasing the student's economic welfare. After checking with several of the public agencies that offer opportunities to low-income or disadvantaged adult education students, it is reported that the students' knowledge of these agencies was received from the Appalachia News.

4. To determine the feasability of communicating readability levels of individual articles in a low-reading level newspaper on a continuing basis to ABE teachers.

Using a reading ease formula closely following the FOG Index developed by Robert Gunning each article was rated according to its reading level. A copy containing the reading level of each article within the newspaper along with the answer to the cross-word puzzle and other suggested teaching ideas using the paper was mailed to each teacher receiving multiple copies of the Appalachia News.

There was no written or prepared evaluation of this objective with the teachers. According to communications with the teachers, the readability scale of each article was used effectively in the classroom. The teachers reported that they would use the readability scale and mark on her copy of the paper the reading level of each article so that in assigning oral reading in class, a student would not be embarrassed by being called on in class to read an article that they could not read.

IV. COMPONENTS:

Outreach:

The Appalachia News has a great influence on adult education in Mississippi Appalachia as well as in the other states where it is being mailed. Presently 5,500 copies are being mailed to adult education students and other interested people in thirty-four states and the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

Other agencies concerned with adult education, i.e., Manpower Training Programs, TVA orientation programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture programs delaing with the underprivileged adult have expressed interest in this project inasmuch as they are included on the mailing list and

articles are being received from these agencies to be included in the newspaper.

Retention:

Retention does not pertain to this program although it is felt the presence of the Appalachia News in the classroom might have an influence on the adult education student's desire to stay in the classroom.

Manpower:

Itawamba Junior College adult education department has the responsibility of administering this program. The staff includes the director of the Vocational Center, Larry Otis and Wylie Wood, supervisor of adult education, who are responsible for the administration of the project.

The newspaper staff includes an editor, Miss Donna Hobson, printer, Rayford Foster, and staff members, Miss Sue Anest who is responsible for art work, Bobby Davis, who is responsible for wrapping, routing, and mailing of the paper, photography, and the students included in the vocational printing class.

Materials:

Material for the Appalachia News comes from several agencies. The Tupelo office of the Social Security Administation, Mr. Hugh Tigrett, Director, writes a weekly column of questions and answers concerning Social Security problems. He encourages students to send questions which will be answered in the newspaper.

The Health Department supplies information for the health information column. This information is re-written by the editor on a lower

reading level.

Wire copy and pictures from United Press International are donated by the Tupelo Daily Journal, local daily newspaper.

The United States Department of Agriculture through the Food and Nutrition Service provides news releases and pictorial recipes. The Extension Services, County Agent's office and Employment Service are other contributors.

Most important are the student's contributions to the Appalachia News. It is this information that tells the adult education story as it is best told by the words of students who participate in the program.

Methods:

A teacher's guide, as mentioned previously, is mailed to teachers with suggested ideas how the newspaper can best be used in the classroom.

The crossword puzzle is used with emphasis on spelling and word meaning.

Students read articles orally and they are taught to read for comprehension.

Health lessons develop for the health information column.

Personal grooming discussions in the class follow the reading of articles of this type in the Appalachia News.

Follow-up:

Follow-up does not pertain to this project.

Counseling:

The Health Information and Social Security News as well as statistical

articles, such as accident rates, that appear from time to time, are used by counselors in the adult education program.

Students are shown the advantage of using resources that they have in the articles that tell them how to build items rather than buy them. For example, issues have contained pictorial directions for building shelves and closets which will conserve the student's monetary resources.

V. State Support:

The Appalachia News has received support throughout the state of Mississippi. Although only twenty counties of Mississippi are included in Appalachia, the entire state has requested copies of the newspaper for use in adult education program.

Other state agencies presently aiding the production of the paper is the Mississippi Vocational Department, inasmuch as they provide equipment for the actual printing of the paper.

The State Department of Adult Education provides funds for the salaries of administrators of the project. It is believed that after this demonstration project has proven itself, the State of Mississippi, Adult Education Department, will assume the funding and operation of this project.

VI. Recommendations:

The Appalachia News was widely received by agencies concerned with raising the standards of the under-educated adult.

Due to the limited size of the paper there was not enough space for a proper balance of articles for male and female readers. Therefore,

the paper seemed to be female oriented. Coverage of all phases of current news was limited by size factor. A large amount of space had to be used for the crossword puzzle and answers which could be provided for in regular teacher's guide compiled by an adult education curriculum specialist, if one were available.

Due to the fact that the Appalachia News has a wide circulation area, local news has to be limited because of the decrease in interest of other students in the local news of this area.

It is recommended strongly that the Appalachia News be expanded to eight pages if not weekly, at least once or twice a month in order to include more information needed by the adult education students.

The addition of four pages could be designed around a core curriculum of materials for adult basic education. It could be retained and used individually or collectively for instructional purposes.

It should be measured in a cost analysis--the number of people served and the cost per publication.

A column or series of articles should be designed to provide self-testing or self-analysis with a comparison of required skills for different areas of work. An example would be a self-test in math for auto mechanics.

A study of the involvement of other agencies should be conducted. This would gauge what is succeeding in the News.

A safety column is planned for inclusion in the Appalachia News. Information for this column will be provided by the Mississippi State

Highway Patrol.

Also planned is a series concerning various occupation so that students can be aware of the many jobs which await them.

More articles will illustrations are planned for the months ahead.

As far as content is concerned, a continuing effort will be made to hold the interest of both male and female readers. Comments from male students indicate that they are conveying household information to their wives.

We feel that these recommendations will make the Appalachia News even more successful by aiding the teachers with their lesson plans. Since we want the teachers to use the newspaper in their classrooms, we feel that if we give them a plan, they will more likely use the newspaper. Thus, the Appalachia News will reach the reader for whom it is intended.

APPENDIX

MISSISSIPPI STATE MODULE: THE APPALACHIA NEWS

The letters and correspondence attached to the Mississippi State Module: The Appalachia News Final Report as "appendix" represent a small sample of the many inquiries, comments, and expressions of appreciation received by the editor and director of the Project.

The materials are presented here to illustrate the impact of the publication, THE APPALACHIA NEWS, upon federal, state, and local agencies in terms of service, adaption, and adoption in the best interest of the disadvantaged adult.

The letters included are only representative of responses from 34 states including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, congressional personalities, state legislative bodies and many others. An important "spin-off" has been the recognition and utilization of the publication in many elementary and secondary schools.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE
1795 Peachtree Road, N.E., Room 302
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

October 6, 1970

Mr. Larry Otis, Director
Itawamba Junior College V&T Center
P. O. Box 302
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Mr. Otis:

The officer-in-charge of our Food and Nutrition Service field office in your city has told us, and we have seen samples, of your college's continued effective usage of nutrition education and food stamp program information in THE APPALACHIA NEWS.

The efforts put forth by Miss Donna Hobson and her editorial staff have contributed much toward the effectiveness of food programs within your circulation area. Indeed, the contributions made by your paper, in the public interest, have been invaluable.

In behalf of FNS Administrator Edward J. Hekman and the Food and Nutrition Service as a whole, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your college for your continued strong support of our programs.

THE APPALACHIA NEWS is performing a valuable public service, of which you may be justly proud.

Sincerely,

Russell H. James, Director
Southeast Region

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC
CONTINUING & ADULT EDUCATION
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036
Area Code 202-223-9400

June 25, 1970

Miss Donna Hobson, Editor
Appalachia News
Vocational & Technical Education Center
Itawamba Junior College
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Miss Hobson:

I have been receiving the Appalachia News regularly, and each week I enjoy it. Having a little experience myself in writing newsletters, I realize what a job this is for you. The purpose of this letter is to thank you for sending me the paper and to commend you for doing an excellent job week in and week out. You should be very proud of your efforts.

Sincerely,

James R. Dorland
Executive Secretary

JRD/lb

AN AFFILIATE OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
Raymond T. McCall, President, San Jose, California • Monroe C. Neff, President-Elect, Albany, New York
Rose Mary Pattison, Secretary, Moline, Illinois • James R. Dorland, Executive Secretary, Washington, D.C.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
CONSUMER AND MARKETING SERVICE
SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL INFORMATION OFFICE
Room 203, 1795 Peachtree Road, Northeast
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

July 9, 1970

Miss Donna Hobson, Editor
APPALACHIA NEWS
Itawamba Junior College
Vocational and Technical Education Center
Post Office Box 302
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Miss Hobson:

We're adding your name to the mailing lists for our weekly news packets, which include "Food Review" and "Food and Nutrition News," at the request of Ralph Dean, officer-in-charge of the Food and Nutrition Service field office at Tupelo.

I'd like to add that we've been pleased with your use of our material, and especially the way you often rewrite it. In fact, we've had a request from our Washington Information Office for a copy of the issue in which you simplified our "How to Buy Canned and Frozen Vegetables" copy. Would you have an extra issue that carried the article you could send to me? It was about mid-April and the title of the article was "Mary wanted to buy vegetables."

Sincerely,

Stanley W. Prochaska

STANLEY W. PROCHASKA
Regional Information Officer

ABERDEEN HIGH SCHOOL
JOHN M. CURLEE, JR., PRINCIPAL
ABERDEEN, MISS. 39730

November 2, 1970

Miss Donna Hopson
Vocational & Technical Educational Center
Itawamba Junior College
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Miss Hopson:

While visiting the center last week, we discussed the possibility of receiving some copies of the Appalachian News to be used with low phase English students. I discussed this matter with the English teachers, and they thought that it would be an excellent educational aid. We could use as many as 200 copies if you could supply us with them.

Sincerely,

John M. Curlee, Jr.
Principal

NEW READERS PRESS BOX 131 • SYRACUSE, NEW YORK • 13210 (315) 476-3576
Division of Laubach Literacy Publishers of News for You, a Weekly Newspaper, and Books for New Readers

July 1, 1970

Ms. Donna Hobson
THE APPALACHIA NEWS
Itawamba Junior College
Vocational and Technical Education Center
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Ms. Hobson:

I am enclosing several copies of the issue of NEWS FOR YOU in which we announce the winners of the newspaper contest. You will notice that THE APPALACHIA NEWS received Honorable Mention among the printed newspapers produced by educators.

Congratulations on the fine job you are doing. We hope you will enter the contest again next year.

Sincerely yours,

Caroline Blakely

(Mrs.) Caroline Blakely
Editor, NEWS FOR YOU

CB/sc

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE
1795 Peachtree Road, N.E., Room 302
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

October 6, 1970

Miss Donna Hobson, Editor
THE APPALACHIA NEWS
P. O. Box 302
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Miss Hobson:

Mr. Ralph Dean, Officer-in-Charge of the Food and Nutrition Service field office serving your area, has reported to me your valuable service to FNS programs in the form of articles and other information on nutrition and program education.

Miss Hobson, the Food and Nutrition Service is most pleased to extend to you our most sincere appreciation for your efforts and to commend you and your staff for the effective way in which you continue to inform rural families about FNS food programs.

Your newspaper is performing a valuable public service.

If we may be of service in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Russell H. James, Director
Southeast Region

Cooperative Extension Service
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
Extension Division
P. O. Box 510
Marion, Virginia 24354
August 26, 1970

Appalachia News
Vocational & Technical Education Center
Itawamba Junior College
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Sir:

Would you please put my name on your mailing list for The Appalachia News. You have had items in some of the recent copies which were helpful in working with the low-income families in our county.

Sincerely,

Hattie Mae Love

(Miss) Hattie Mae Love
Extension Agent

mao

State of Mississippi

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
G. H. JOHNSTON, Superintendent

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
A. P. FATHERREE, DIRECTOR
P. O. BOX 771
JACKSON, MISS. 39205

August 10, 1970

Miss Donna Hobson, Editor
Appalachia News
Vocational-Technical Educational Center
P. O. Box 302
Tupelo, Mississippi 38802

Dear Miss Hobson:

My recent visit to the Tupelo Vocational Technical Center was very rewarding and my contact with you and the other personnel there was most pleasant. All of you deserve the highest commendation for the manner in which you perform your work.

Enclosed is a copy of the current MDTA Center mailing list on which I have noted the number of copies of the Appalachia News that will be sufficient to service each center. This paper will, I am sure, prove to be an invaluable training and teaching aid as well as an instrument of information. I most certainly hope that you will be able to furnish this number of additional copies. You are aware, I know, that the ABE program is assuming responsibility for basic and remedial education in MDT projects.

Thank you very much for your courtesy and cooperation.

Yours truly,

William E Turner

William E. Turner
Itinerant Teacher, Communicative
and Employability Skills Program

WET/dr
Encl.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
REGION V

OFFICE OF EDUCATION

226 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD, ROOM [illegible]
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60606

June 26, 1970

Miss Donna Hobson
Editor
Appalachia News
Vocational and Technical
Education Center
Itawamba Junior College
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Miss Hobson:

About a month ago I met Mr. Larry Otis when he and I attended the annual board meeting of AABEDC in Morehead, Kentucky. At that time I requested sample copies of your excellent newspaper.

I have sent sample copies to the state ABE directors in Region V and therefore my reason for needing it has been met. Please discontinue sending me copies each week.

Accept my commendations for the content, quality and appealing format and photography in the newspaper.

Gratefully yours,

M. Eldon Schultz

M. Eldon Schultz
Adult Education Program Officer

Dantee, Georgia
August 1, 1970

Miss Donna Hobson
Editor - Appalachia News
Shawamba Junior College

Dear Miss Hobson,

Thank you so much for sending The Appalachia News to our class.

Your paper is very interesting and we look forward to its arrival each week. I am sure my class will benefit from your paper.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,
(Zebeta Robinson)
for Clarkesville Class

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

AUSTIN, TEXAS

78711

• STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
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• STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

October 2, 1970

Ms. Donna Hobson
Editor
The Appalachia News
Vocational and Technical
Education Center
Itawamba Junior College
400 Eason Boulevard
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Ms. Hobson:

A copy of your fine publication, The Appalachia News, crossed my desk the other day, and I would like to know if you have a free mailing of this publication to persons in adult education. If so, I would like to have my name added to the list.

May I also ask you to send me all back copies since you began publishing.

Thank you for advising me of the disposition of this request.

Sincerely,

Luke L. Patrenella, Jr., Consultant
Program Planning and Approval
Adult and Continuing Education

LLP:gt

drive friendly

Carroll County Adult Basic Education Center

Hillsville, Virginia
24343

Joseph N. Berry
Director

September 21, 1970

Gary L. Lowe
Assistant Director

The Appalachia News
Vocational and Technical Education Center
Itawamba Junior College

Dear Sir:

Would you please send us 45 copies of the Applachia News to be given to each student in our Adult Basic Education Classes. Would you also include a teacher's guide. (9 classes)

These papers will be used and greatly appreciated.

Thank You.

Sincerely Yours,

Gary L. Lowe

Gary L. Lowe
Administrative Supervisor
Adult Basic Education

A co-operative program with Morehead State University, Morehead, Ky.
A A B E D C funded under Title III 89-750

ICS Inc.
Project Headstart

ROBERT S. HILL
CHAIRMAN I C S

WALTER ROGERS
CHAIRMAN I C S P.A.C.

ARVERN MOORE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

P. O. BOX 386 TELEPHONE AREA CODE 601 252-1582
HOLLY SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI 38635

September 21, 1970

Miss Donna Hobson
Editor, The Appalachia News
Vocational-Technical Center
Itawamba Junior College
Tupelo, Mississippi

Dear Miss Hobson:

I read with interest the article in The Commercial Appeal about The Appalachia News you are writing and printing.

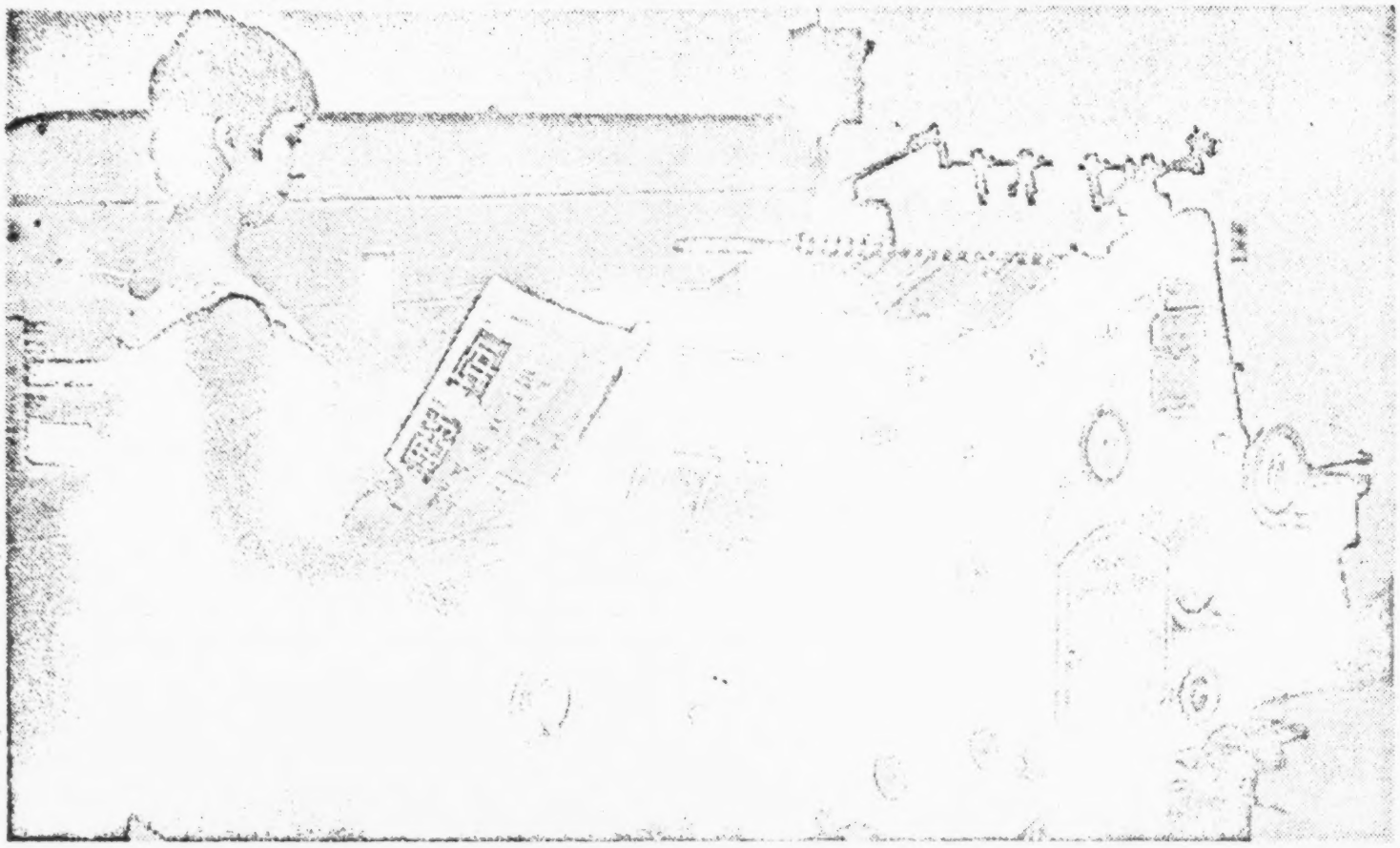
I am in charge of all training done in our Headstart program and feel that such a publication would be a great help in our adult education program.

Could you please send me a sample copy and information about obtaining regular copies of The Appalachia News?

Thank you very much for your assistance!

Sincerely yours,
Martha H. Molpus
(Mrs.) Martha H. Molpus
Career Development Officer

/mhm



Editor Donna Hobson Of Tupelo, Miss., Checks The Applachia News

—Photo by Fred Grimm

Special News Is Right On Target

By FRED GRIMM
From The Commercial Appeal
Northeast Miss. Bureau

TUPELO, Miss., Sept. 5. — For a man or woman just learning to read, using a conventional newspaper can present a difficult problem.

So, Itawamba Junior College officials working with basic adult education classes attacked the problem and came up with a solution — The Appalachia News.

More than 5,000 copies of the simply written tabloid newspaper are printed on the offset presses at the Itawamba Junior College Vocational-Technical Center in Tupelo each week.

They are mailed to persons in basic adult education classes in 20 Northeast Mississippi counties, and to persons connected with similar classes and antipoverty work in 33 other states.

Stories in the newspaper touch on current, local and national events.

"We printed our first issue, about 1,000 copies, last February," Donna Hobson, the 24-year-old editor, said. "We were originally funded for a six-month period, but the United States Office of Education has just added enough money for another year."

The youthful editor, except for occasional help, doubles as the entire news staff. Her job is to translate national and local news into simple, short sentences, "ranging from the first and second to the eighth grade reading levels."

She also prints helpful information, particularly for low-income persons, from the health department, the Agriculture Extension Service, and the Social Security office.

Special weekly features include simple crossword puzzles (created by Miss Hobson), pictorial recipes, and a large-type illustrated section for new readers.

"I thought this would be hard at first," she said, "But now it isn't difficult at all. I'm just afraid that I'll begin talking on the same level."

Larry Otis, director of the college's vo-tech center, realized the possibility of such a publication two years ago, and until February, sought ways to fund the undertaking.

"It satisfies one of the biggest problems facing teachers in adult education — finding materials relating to adults," he said.

"The students seem to really look forward to it," Miss Hobson said. "It's specially intended for them, and they can identify with it."

"The Appalachia News may just be simple reading to the average person, but to a poorly educated adult in basic education classes, it is much more," Miss Hobson said. "It's an informative tool to practice newly acquired skills — something like an adult "Weekly Reader" with local news."

B. D. Brown, Chairman
Dr. William C. Burrus
Knox C. Doss
James W. Hawkins

SUMNER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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OFFICE PHONE 452-2070 RES. PHONE 452-1752

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Ernest Pellegrin
J. W. Wiseman, Jr.

Mr. Wylie Wood,
Supervisor of ABE
Vocational & Technical Ed. Center
Drawer 1588
Tupelo, Miss. 38801

Dear Mr. Wood:
Thank you so much for the Appalachia news.
I would like very much to have 3 more added to the list.

I am just from Ala. state University workshop or ABE Institute, under the direction of Dr. M.L. Morrison.

The group I worked with was very impressed with the paper. We are going to attempt to copy from you.
Please continue to send them.

Thank you very much
Evelyn P. Hall.

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY
MUSCLE SHOALS, ALABAMA 35660

June 15, 1970

Miss Donna Hobson, Editor
The Appalachia News
Post Office Box 302
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Miss Hobson:

Thank you for the copies of your excellent newspaper The Appalachia News. This paper would be most helpful to us in our efforts to encourage our trainees to continue their education through additional reading outside of the classroom.

You said in your letter of May 12, 1970, that it might be possible for us to be included on your mailing list for multiple copies of your paper after July 1, 1970. If this is possible, we would like to receive a minimum of 60 copies each week. If it is not possible for us to get this many copies, we would still like to receive as many as you can provide.

Please let us know if you will be able to add us to your mailing list for fiscal year 1971, and how many copies you will be able to send us each week.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

Mercer L. Chason
Mercer L. Chason, Project Manager
Manpower Development Project

HUBERT S. LOTT
COLLINS

DOUGLAS C. STONE, CHAIRMAN
COLUMBUS

MRS. CLYDE V. WILLIAMS
CARTHAGE

MISSISSIPPI
EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION

JOHN E. ALDRIDGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MISSISSIPPI STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
AFFILIATED WITH THE
UNITED STATES EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE COMMISSION, P. O. BOX 1699

In Reply Refer
To:

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39205

May 13, 1970

Editor, The Appalachia News
Vocational and Technical Educational Center
Itawanba Junior College
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Editor:

It would be very much appreciated if you would add the following addresses for receiving copies of "The Appalachia News":

Manager, Work Incentive Program
Mississippi State Employment Service
Post Office Box 1848
Jackson, Mississippi 39205

and

Manager, Work Incentive Program
Mississippi State Employment Service
Post Office Box 1472
Columbus, Mississippi 39701

Both of these offices operate a two-week orientation and assessment program for enrollees in the Work Incentive Program. During this two week program the enrollees are given instruction in the "World of Work" and hints on how to apply for a job, good work habits, health habits, etc. It is felt that your publication will be most useful during this two-week orientation period.

Sincerely,

Ralph W. Alewine, Jr., Chief
Manpower Programs

RWA/mts

GOLDEN TRIANGLE VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL CENTER
DIVISION OF EAST MISSISSIPPI JUNIOR COLLEGE
P. O. BOX 171
COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI 39701
TELEPHONE 327-1112

October 1, 1970

Mrs. Donna Hobson
Itawamba Junior College
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

Dear Mrs. Hobson,

At the present time we are receiving one hundred copies of the "Appalachia News". Our enrollment has increased to two hundred and fifty students. Would you please increase our mailing to two hundred and fifty copies of the "Appalachia News".

We enjoy reading the "Appalachia News" very much and try to utilize it in all our Adult Basic Education Classes.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert Craig
Supervisor ABE

RC/jh

RFD
RURAL FAMILY
DEVELOPMENT

A NATIONAL ADULT BASIC EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Miss Donna Hobson
Vocational and Technical Education Center
Itawamba College
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801

I would deeply appreciate, Miss Hobson...

your placing RFD on your mailing list to receive the Appalachia News. This very impressive paper would be extremely useful to us in our program development work at Wisconsin.

For your information, I am enclosing a complete set of professional newsletters we have prepared that describe the RFD project in some detail. I have also placed your name on our mailing list to receive future copies.

If there is a charge to receive the News, please let me know the amount and I will remit immediately. Many thanks.

Cordially,

Boris Frank

Boris Frank
Project Director

as
Encl.

July 15, 1970

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
The University of Wisconsin

WHA-TV

P. O. Box 5421
Madison, Wisconsin 53705
Phone (608) 263-2121

APPALACHIAN ADULT EDUCATION NEWSPAPER
ITAWAMBA JUNIOR COLLEGE
VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER
TUPELO, MISSISSIPPI

IN-SERVICE TRAINING SESSION
February 28, 1970

PROGRAM

9:00 - 9:10	.....WELCOME.....	Larry Otis, Director Itawamba Junior College Vocational-Technical Education Center
9:10 - 9:30	.....	Supervisor, Adult Basic Education State Department of Education
9:30 - 10:00	..... Explanation of Appalachian Adult Education Demonstration Center and its involvement in the Project...	Husain Quazilbash, Curriculum Specialist, Appalachian ABE Demonstration Center
10:00 - 10:10	..... BREAK	
10:10 - 10:30	..... Objectives and Purpose of the Adult Education Newspaper.....	Larry Otis
10:30 - 11:00	..... How the Newspaper will be Prepared, Printed and Distributed to Students.....	Miss Donna Hobson, Editor Appalachian ABE Newspaper Itawamba Junior College
11:00 - 11:30	..... How an Adult Education Newspaper can be used effectively in the classroom.....	Mrs. Elizabeth Long, ABE Teacher Itawamba Junior College
11:30 - 12:00	..... What I am Expecting out of the Adult Education Newspaper as a Supervisor.....	Robert L. Grimes Adult Basic Education Supervisor Houston Public Schools
12:00 - 1:00	..... LUNCH	